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# CONFERENCE *connection*

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SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

August 1, 2021

## Shout Out to the Commission on Ministry and Teams

The SEC Commission on Ministry is amazing! The Commission itself has 9 individuals (the chairperson who is elected as part of the Board of Directors and 8 additional members appointed by the SEC Board). Four members are leaders of the 4 Teams (Preparation for Authorized Ministry Team; Ministerial Oversight Standing and Transfers Team; Support and Nurture Team; and Church Team). Each of these teams involves several members. But all Teams also involve more people to assist with the Team's work! Many people are engaged in this important Conference ministry! So what do they do? Lots of things!



We have 29 persons in the process of exploring ordination! This means mentors for each one. We also have 15 persons in the process of seeking Privilege of Call in the UCC. Of course, there are also those seeking transfer of ministerial standings, endorsement for professional connections, overseeing the Boundary Awareness requirement, conducting Fitness Reviews, connecting with new clergy in the conference, supporting and facilitating the Communities of Practice program, clergy retreats, and we now have 3 inquiries about churches interested in affiliating with the UCC or starting a new faith community. All of these take time and require building relationships. The work of the Commission Teams is extensive and crucial! They certainly deserve our thanks! If you think you might be interested in becoming involved in some aspect of the work of the Commission and Teams, contact Rev. Heather Fosburgh ([hfosburgh@secucc.org](mailto:hfosburgh@secucc.org)).

## News from the Conference Office

### Annual Meeting Workshop Videos Available Online

There were 11 workshops offered at our June 18-19, 2021 Annual Meeting which were recorded so that others could enjoy the opportunity of learning. They are now [located here](#) on the Southeast Conference website. The workshop titles are listed below; detailed descriptions are [on our website](#).

- Helping Your Church Become “Accessible To All.”
- Post-Pandemic Possibilities: Cleaner Air?
- Trans 101: The Myth of Binary
- The Great Unveiling: How the World Is Changing and What It Means for the Church
- General Synod 33: What is it About?
- The Importance of Becoming W.I.S.E. (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged for persons with mental health challenges)
- Do Black Lives Really Matter? The Aftermath of the Derek Chauvin Trial and Conviction
- The Way of the Spirit
- Effective Branding in Ministry Worship Experience
- Healing Forward and through WERiSE
- Discipleship to Jesus in an Age of Mass Incarceration

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### Celebrating an Ordination and two Installations

The Commission on Ministry has been hard at work the last couple of months and we have a number of opportunities in the coming weeks to celebrate the ministries happening in the Southeast Conference.

- Ordination of Tonya Barnett on August 22, 2021
- Installation of Rev. Dr. Valencia Jackson on August 22, 2021
- Installation of Rev. Courtney Jones on September 11, 2021

Learn more about these ministers [on our website](#).

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### Clergy Zoom Connections for August

- **An Hour of Conversations and Prayer**

Tuesday, August 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 - 11:00 a.m. Eastern (10:00 a.m. Central); Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/479440102>

- **Live Harp Meditations for Ministers**

Thursday, August 19 - 12:00 p.m. Eastern (11:00 Central)

20 minutes of meditation with Celtic harp. Silent prayer and reflection following if desired, facilitated by Rev. Jean Norton. (For questions or to sign up for individual Therapeutic Harp Sessions, contact Jean at [HeartSongJean@gmail.com](mailto:HeartSongJean@gmail.com).)

Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/96976838422>

- **Especially for Specialized Ministers**

Tuesday, August 24, 2021 - 9:30 a.m. Eastern (8:30 a.m. Central)

Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/354744689>

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## Re-Opening of Churches – Conversation for all Church Leaders

- **Monday, August 23 - 7 pm Eastern/6 pm Central**

Many churches are moving to in-person worship. This is an opportunity to learn about each other's experiences, recommendations, etc. We invite all Moderators, Church Leaders, and Clergy to be part of the conversation. [REGISTER](#)

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## COVID-19 Update and the Recent CDC guidelines

We are all navigating our responses to COVID-19 as we hear reports of vaccination rates and outbreaks. We can experience emotions of hope and despair, relief and anger. Rev. Mike Denton, Conference Minister of the Pacific Northwest Conference has written a helpful reflection on his recent blog as the CDC guidelines lifts up the importance of wearing masks – even for those who are vaccinated. You can read Rev. Denton's reflection here <https://centeringout.blog/2021/07/30/7-30-21-covid-19-pnc-update/>

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## Prayer List

We are continuing the process of praying for authorized ministers, congregations, and ministry groups throughout 2021. We encourage you to include these prayer requests in your local church newsletter, share them with your prayer circle, and include them in your own prayers.

### Week of August 1

- Unity UCC; Montgomery, Alabama
- Marsha Brown
- Kathryn Hauk
- Lewis Kola
- Robert Rezash
- Sonya Gravlee

### Week of August 8

- First Congregational UCC; Savannah, Georgia
- Mary Brueggemann
- Rose Hermonat
- Derrick Rice
- George Thomas

## Pastoral Transitions

Pastor **Jan Whiteman** will retire from First United Church, Belvidere, TN on August 8. Jan has served the church for 5 years and will be retiring to Fayetteville, TN. We wish her well in her retirement!

Rev. **Tyler Ung**'s last Sunday as Associate Pastor at Circular Congregational, Charleston SC will be August 15. Tyler will be moving to NC where he will be

serving as minister with youth, children, and families at Umstead Park United Church of Christ in Raleigh and assistant to the chaplain's office at Duke Divinity School. Please keep Tyler in prayer as he moves into these new settings for ministry.

## Churches in Transition

First Congregational, Montgomery AL; First Congregational, Savannah GA; Trinity Congregational, Athens AL; Rush Memorial, Atlanta GA; United Church of Cookeville, Cookeville TN; Holy Trinity Community Church, Nashville TN; First United Church, Belvidere TN

## News from the Wider Church



## Summary of Resolutions from General Synod 33

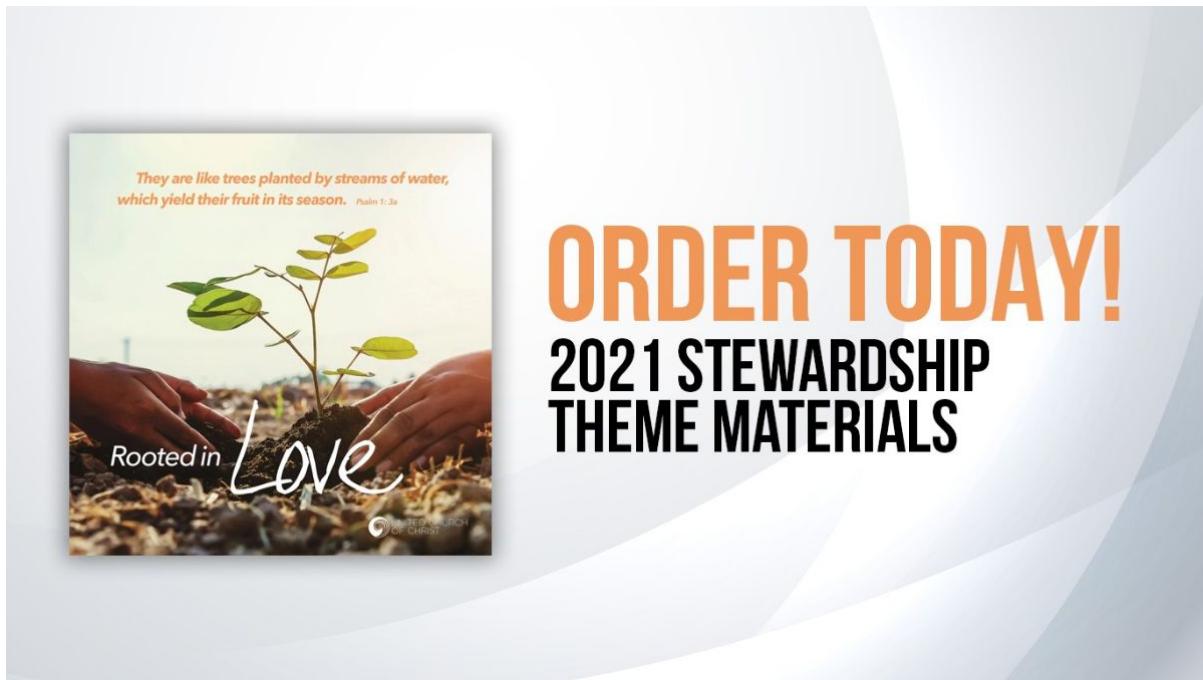
At the recent national General Synod (July 11-18, 2021), delegates considered nine "Resolutions of Witness." These are resolutions that are basically statements made to the wider church and society on behalf of the General Synod delegates and require at least a 2/3 affirmative vote.

General Synod can only speak for itself and does not represent the opinions of local churches. However, because the United Church of Christ is based on covenantal relationships, conferences and local churches are encouraged to consider the resolutions of the General Synod for their own learning and action.

Our Conference website has a [list of those Resolutions](#) and links to articles from the UCC website.

## UCC Office of General Counsel Webpage

Conferences and local churches have benefited from the wisdom shared by UCC General Counsel, Heather Kimmel. We are excited to share that she now has a web presence at the National Setting, including periodic blogs and articles. Check the articles already posted: <https://www.ucc.org/office-of-general-counsel-2>.



## "Rooted in Love" Materials for Fall Stewardship

New stewardship materials are available to help tell your story while making a request for financial support. The materials include a variety of items to run an effective campaign, including bulletin inserts, pledge cards, and graphics. A practical campaign guide provides support for leaders who are running their first campaign and also offers suggestions if you're looking to customize stewardship messages to your own setting.

## Trainings and Conferences



## Healthy Boundaries for Retired Ministers

Retired ministers who do not serve as pastors in a local church but who may preach periodically, officiate at weddings, funerals, etc. now have the option to attend a special Healthy Boundaries Course focused on issues faced by retired ministers. The course fulfills the four-year requirement for Southeast Conference clergy. (Fee is \$35). The online course will be held August 18, 1-4 pm Eastern/12 pm-3 pm Central. [REGISTER](#)

**Tenth Annual  
Retired  
UCC Servants Retreat**

*Event promises intellectual stimulation,  
spiritual enlightenment, reflection and renewing friendships  
and/or making new friends for retired UCC clergy, missionaries,  
volunteer ministry workers and spouses of the  
Southeast and Southern Conferences of the United Church of Christ.  
Retreat is co-sponsored with Blowing Rock Conference Center.*

## Make Plans to Attend the Retired Servants Retreat

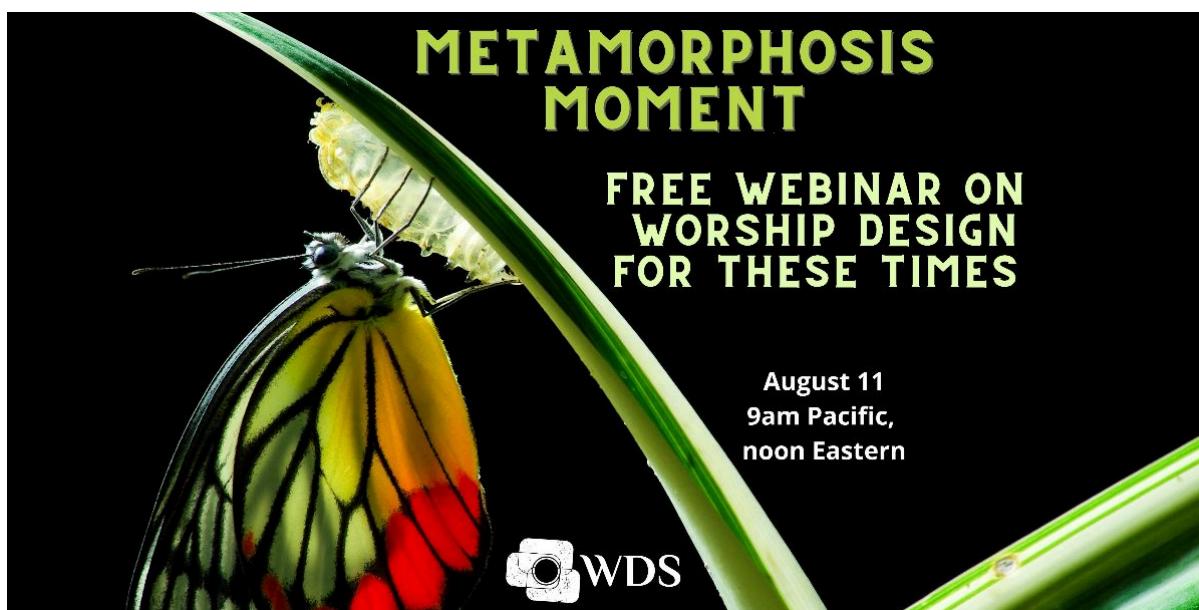
Join fellow retired UCC ministry servants for the Tenth Annual retreat, October 11-13, 2021 in Blowing Rock, NC. The event promises intellectual stimulation, spiritual enlightenment, reflection, and renewing of friendships and/or making new friends. This event is for retired UCC clergy, missionaries, volunteer ministry workers and spouses of the Southeast and Southern Conferences of the United Church of Christ. The retreat is co-sponsored with Blowing Rock Conference Center.

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## Protecting Your Congregation From Slips, Trips & Falls

Church should be a safe place for people to worship and gather, however based on the number of claims related to slips and falls, many congregants experience injuries that are life changing. Churches are full of potential hazards for congregants: steps and stair wells, slippery parking lots, walkways, and surfaces, sidewalks in disrepair, and transitions (carpet to vinyl, etc).

Join Insurance Board on Thursday, August 12 at 2pm EST as Attorney James Abbott offers considerations for your ministry to provide a safer environment for everyone. Insurance Board's very own Cy McFarlin, Director of Claims Administration, and Monroe Moore, Senior Claims Analyst, will be available to discuss claims trends impacting ministries related to slips, trips and falls. [REGISTER](#)



## Free webinar: Worship in this "gooey" moment

Many of us are beginning to turn our attention to the "what's next" of the fall and new liturgical year. But as much as we would like things to be solid once more, it feels like such a "gooey" moment... you know, the way a chrysalis spends time in the "goo" stage before anything starts to re-form. We are likely operating with reduced budgets and new financial constraints brought about by the pandemic, not to mention some real decision-fatigue. But there is hope and possibility.

Join Marcia McFee for a free webinar on Wednesday, August 11th at 12:00 noon EDT / 11 am Central to learn all about this "metamorphosis moment" in our culture and in our churches. Sign up [HERE](#) to claim your spot. They will be recording this webinar and sending it out to all who register, so even if you can't join live at that time, go ahead and sign up anyway and you'll receive the recording when it is available.

## Conference Calendar

August 3 @ 11:00 am - 12:00 pm EDT  
[Clergy Conversations via Zoom](#)

August 10 @ 11:00 am - 12:00 pm EDT  
[Clergy Conversations via Zoom](#)

August 17 @ 11:00 am - 12:00 pm EDT  
[Clergy Conversations via Zoom](#)

August 18 @ 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm EDT  
[Healthy Boundaries for Retired Ministers](#)

August 19 @ 12:00 pm - 12:30 pm EDT  
[Live Harp Meditations for Ministers](#)

August 19 @ 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm EDT  
[Commission on Ministry Meeting](#)

August 22 @ 11:00 am - 12:00 pm EDT  
[Ordination of Tonya Barnett](#)

August 22 @ 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm EDT  
[Installation of Rev. Dr. Valencia Jackson](#)

August 23 @ 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm EDT

## Re-Opening of Churches – Conversation for all Church Leaders

View the **full calendar** of events online: <https://www.secucc.org/events/>

## Contact Us

Conference Minister: **Rev. Char Burch**; [cburch@secucc.org](mailto:cburch@secucc.org)

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